

855 well, and these are soon learnt by the child who is fortunate
 [867] enough to have many kinsmen. Primarily, responsibility rests
 with the parents for the care and support of their offspring, but
 they have the advice, assistance, and material aid of their
 relatives. Nor are these limited to the near kindred of either
 father or mother; all members of the ancestral family take
 their part. Housemates, also, even if unrelated, take an in-
 terest in any child who shares their habitation, irrespective of
 his rank.

868 Much of the care bestowed on children is of a magical
 nature and must be reserved until a later chapter. Little boys
 follow their fathers on hunting expeditions and so acquire knowl-
 edge by practical experience, as do girls from their mothers
 with regard to household tasks and feminine occupations.

867 Even small children are quick to notice the attention paid to
 the orders of chiefs, and carry out their commands without
 demur. A disobedient child is beaten or thrown into cold
 861 water; the parents usually act in such cases, though a near
 relative does not hesitate to do so, especially if he is a chief.

● 857 Like all other children, Bella Coola boys and girls are fond of
 867 stories and listen eagerly to the tales told in the long evenings
 538 by some old man or woman. Many of these are somewhat
 obscene, but they serve to teach much ancient lore, and at the
 same time to emphasize many taboos and restrictions which
 are thus assimilated without definite schooling. They illus-

[626] trate the laws of morality, as does the public disapproval shown
 to anyone who infringes some point of etiquette or behaviour.

[825] If a child makes fun of a cat-fish or a bull-head, he is not told
 to stop doing so; instead, one of his elders tells him how, in the
 distant past, there was a famine, and advises him not to scoff
 at the fish which alone saved his ancestors from starvation at
 that time. If a rude little boy laughs at a maimed or deformed
 [732] man, he is told of *Atalals*, a Bella Bella urchin who repeatedly
 mocked a one-eyed man and presently, himself, lost the sight
 of an eye.

867 "Don't laugh at cripples, blind people, or those who are
 [735]

GAMES

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in former times. *Skisa* might almost be called the Bella Coola national game, although it is now (1923) seldom played.

A game with somewhat similar rules is *sqwlaik*, played with small wooden spears tipped with bone. When a number of men or boys decide to play, they choose two captains who in turn select their teams; any number can take part, provided that the sides are equal, but five each is usual. There is a special name for each player according to his position, and he bets against the corresponding member of the other team. A mark is set up, and one of the captains throws his spear, so that it will stick upright in the ground as near the target as possible. The rival leader endeavours to beat this, and if he fails, his second man throws, and each in succession until one comes closer to the goal than the rival captain. Then the latter's number two tries to beat the last thrower, followed by those on his own side until one succeeds or till all have thrown. The game thus ends when all of one side have thrown unsuccessfully. The winning side is, of course, the one to which belongs the player whose throw is nearest the target. Each member of the losing team pays his wager to his adversary and a second round is begun.

The sport is now rarely indulged in, but in former times games used to continue all day, and valuables were lost in the gambling which was considered to be a necessary part of it. Men used to observe ceremonial chastity to increase their chances of success and the expert was regarded with admiration by younger lads. The crack team of a village often used to visit other towns to compete against their representatives, and the games were contested amid frenzied excitement on the part of the supporters. This occasionally led to serious fighting.

Another sport of a similar type is archery; a mark is set up and each competitor tries to lodge his arrow as close to it as possible. This game has now entirely lost favour, the young men preferring a type of football played without strict attention to rules, but with great energy.

Bella Coola children, too, have their games and recreations, many of them of an imitative nature. Little boys enjoy nothing

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857 better than hunting birds and small animals with miniature bows and arrows, or snaring them in nooses of grass or string. Little girls make playhouses in which they cook wonderful meals of berries, with perhaps the addition of a wooden fish. On the whole, however, the children do not enter into play as boisterously as white boys and girls, nor do they seem to derive as much pleasure from it. In former times, when clothing was scanty, small lads used to delight in picking nettles and beating one another with the stinging branches; this must have caused considerable pain, but it was a point of honour not to cry out, and anyone, perhaps caught unaware, who showed discomfort, [152] [291] was laughed at as a coward. Both boys and girls are fond of [526] swinging, and even adult women sometimes find time to enjoy themselves by swaying to and fro at the end of a rope.

Young Bella Coola do not have as many toys as white children, and none of them is complex. Some girls have crude [575] wooden dolls, though elaborate figurines are reserved for use [231] in *kusiut* dances. Perhaps the most cherished plaything is a small puppy or, in recent years, a kitten, though the unfortunate animal is handled and mauled without consideration. A good carpenter may make for his son a wooden top or a bull-roarer, to the envy of his less fortunate friends. Both types of toys are said to be used in [575] *Nusmât-a* and at some *kusiut* dances the masked figures carry them to play with.

526 There is one game, *sleli*, which the salmon are [825] said to delight to watch, and which is accordingly played by boys as soon as the first spring salmon have been disposed of with fitting rites. Each makes for himself, or is given by his father, a wooden spear with a projecting barb, fastened as shown in the accompanying sketch (see Fig. 2). A loop of branches is made and thrown into a pool of stagnant, or slow-moving water, on each side of which stands a rival group of competitors. At a signal, all throw their spears simultaneously, with the intention of passing them through the ring, so that the barb of each will



FIG. 2.
"Toy spear."